1;Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

764 bundle about two feet long; enveloped in a piece of cloth of native make, prepared by being painted in an allegorical manner.

These cloths, about four feet long by two wide, are painted with red vegetable juice, in figures two to four inches long. The devices vary according to the cause of the death of the individual; whether it be from fever or other disease, old age, snake bite, wounds, &c. One of these cloths, in the Smithsonian museum, is painted for a person who is supposed to have died from snake bite.

The bones, having been tied up in the new bundle, are carried, again under a pole, to the house where the feast is to be held, and are there placed on a little rack overhead, out of the way of persons passing underneath.

Everything being ready, the first installment of food cooked, the chicha brewed, and chocolate boiled, the feast begins.

[123] I had the rare good fortune, not only to witness the ceremony at the death of the persons mentioned above, but also to be present at the death feast of the chief Santiago. That is to say, I saw all that happened on the first and the last days; the intervening thirteen or fourteen being all alike; a succession of eating, drinking, dancing; a disgusting scene of carousal and debauch that did not possess even the merit of variety.

766 The feast was held in a large house, adjoining the residence of the chief Birche. The house is about seventy-five feet long and forty wide; the ends being round, and the only light entering by the large doorway left open at one end. A little rack, made of wild cane was tied up to the sloping side of the house, about eight feet from the floor, and on this was laid the bundle containing the disjointed skeleton of the murdered chief. At a given signal, the principal singer or priest took his position on a low stool, flanked by the other priests and some volunteers. All were regaled with chocolate served in little gourds. The priest began a low chant and

[372] two men started twirling the stick to light the fire. As fast as one tired, another took his place until the sparks glowed in the pit bored in the lower stick. A yell from the priest announced this, and a piece of cotton wool was ignited from the burning dust; with this the fire-wood, previously prepared, was lighted and the fire placed under the remains. Here it was kept up until the end of the feast. After the lighting of the fire, singing and dancing began in earnest, interrupted occasionally by eating and drinking.

766 The dances are very similar; the principal differences visible to an ob-
●534 server are in the disposition of the dancers, whether in a circle or in one
535 or two straight lines. In the latter case, the two lines are parallel, and the dancers face each other. The dancing is kept up to the "music" of small drums, carved out of a solid piece of wood, with a single head, made of the belly skin of the iguana; the other end is open. The drum is held under the left arm, and is beaten with the tips of the fingers of the right hand. The drummers, ranged in a line, sing a monotonous song, with a chorus; the time being beaten on the drums. Sometimes a

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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dried armadillo skin is scraped with a large bean-like seed; in the same manner as I have seen the negroes of the West Indies scrape a roughened calabash with a bone. The dancers clasp each other over the shoulder, around the waist, or hook arms; both sexes taking part in the dancing, but not in the singing or drumming, these being the especial province of the men. The steps are usually about three forward and to one side, and then the same number backward. When arranged in a circle, this carries them gradually around the musicians. When in a straight line, they keep on the same spot. The songs are a sort of recitative, sometimes impromptu, sometimes of fixed words; the chorus a sort of "fol-de-rol," a series of meaningless syllables. These songs for dancing must not, however, be confounded with the sacred songs of the priests, of which I shall have occasion to make fuller mention in the proper place.

The dances are kept up nearly all, and sometimes all night at the funeral feast; the participants retiring from time to time and sleeping an hour or two when exhausted, and returning with renewed vigor to chicha drinking, eating, and dancing. It is particularly on these occasions, when the older people are too drunk, or too busy to keep strict watch, that the younger folks manage to evade their vigilance and ——. These eminently practical courtships almost invariably precede the asking of the father's consent by the would-be bridegroom.

After more than two weeks of this license and debauchery, during which three cows, about a dozen pigs, hundreds of bunches of plantains, several quintals of rice, and hundreds of gallons of chicha had been devoured, the *bi-ka-kra* or steward announced that the commissary had given out and the riot must come to an end. I was notified according to previous agreement and went at the time appointed. As distinguished guests, our party of four were shown to the best hammocks, where we were seated, and in a few minutes served with cups of chocolate. In a little while, all of the priests seated themselves on low benches, the leader in the middle. The lay chorus singers were ranged in a double line facing each other and below the priests. The fire was carefully carried from its place under the corpse and piled almost between the feet of the principal priest. All drank chocolate and the priests sounded their rattles. The leader began a low dirge-like song in the sacred jargon, which I was told described in detail the journey of the defunct to the other world. It told of the dangerous rivers he had to cross, where alligators lay in wait to devour him; of the great serpents who disputed his path; of the high hills he had to climb with weary steps; of the fearful precipices he must scale; of the beautiful birds with sweet songs, compared with which even the flute-like *silguero* was as a crow; of the gorgeous butterflies that lightened up the path like flying flowers, and finally of his safe arrival at the country of the great *Si-bu*, where he would have nothing to do but eat, drink, sleep, and enjoy himself.

The song was divided into stanzas, and the priests all followed the lead of their chief, the words being a series of set phrases, but in a language

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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411 front end, from two to even four feet long, is made of the same wood as the bow. For fish this is sharpened to a point and is barbed on one, two, or even three edges, or is made round. For quadrupeds, the wood is [22] shorter, not barbed, and is tipped with a lance-like head made by laboriously grinding down an old knife blade to the requisite form. For small birds, the head ends in a broad round button, flat on the face. The Tiribis use also a little arrow, ending in a slightly open bunch of small reeds. These are for killing a fish, common in the Tilorio, never more [227] than five or six inches long, and which rests attached to rocks by a sucking surface. The fish is so small that several points are necessary to the arrow, so that if one does not strike another may. No poison is used on the arrows, and, in fact the people seem to know of none. In their quarrels, a stick is used over six feet long, nearly an inch thick and about two inches wide, and made of the same wood as the bows, arrows, and planting-sticks. It is very heavy and is grasped by the fingers and thumbs of both hands in such a manner that they are guarded from a blow. They guard and strike an "over-blow" always holding by both hands. They are going out of use now that the people have discovered [691] the easier, but more dangerous process of litigation. Cracked heads and broken arms give way to damages. For killing small birds the blow-gun [223] is used. This is a tube seven or eight feet long, made by punching and burning the pith out from the heart of a palm trunk, nearly two inches thick. They are made very straight and true inside, and are provided with a double sight on top, made of two glass beads placed half an inch apart: when finished they are covered with some resin or a species of pitch to keep them from cracking or warping. The missiles are clay balls. These, previously prepared are carried in a little net, with them there are two bone implements. One, simply a straight heavy piece of bone used to drive a ball out of the tube by its weight, in case of sticking. The other is similar in appearance, but the end is worked into a round pit with sharp edges, for trimming the balls to the proper size and shape. [713] During the war between the Bri-bris and Tiribis, at the beginning of this century, the principal arm used was an iron-headed lance fastened to a shaft barely four feet long. For defense, round shields were carried on the arm, made of the thickest part of the hide of the tapir. I was fortunate enough to secure specimens of both, together with nearly all the other implements, &c., described in the present paper. They are all in the Smithsonian Museum.

534 All people have some kind of music which doubtless gives pleasure to them, although to our unappreciative ears it may sound rude and disagreeable. The Marimba, an African instrument, found all over semi-civilized Central America, is unknown here. I cannot understand the surprise of an eminent African traveler, who writes wonderingly of the coincidence, of finding this instrument in use in Africa and among the Indians of Central America. It was introduced with the African slaves and has been retained among their descendants and neighbors. The

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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savage Indians do not possess it. The drum is their greatest favorite. 534
It is from twenty inches to two feet long, cylindrical for half its length, with a diameter of six or seven inches; it then tapers convexly to near the other end and then widens out a little. The pattern is always the same, and the size varies but a few inches. The larger end is tightly covered with the skin from the belly of the iguana lizard. It is glued on by fresh blood, being held in place with string until dry. A cord tied around each end suspends it loosely from the left shoulder, and it is held under the left arm, being beaten with the tips of the fingers of the right hand. It is used principally to accompany and keep time to singing and is an indispensable part of every feast or gathering of whatever kind. To accompany the invigorating music of the drum and help the din, an armadillo skin is sometimes used. This is scraped over the rings with a large hard bean-like seed. It at least helps to add to the noise, if it does not contribute melody. A little flute, about as musical as a penny whistle, is sometimes added to the concert, though it seems rather to be looked upon as a toy. These flutes are made of a bone of some bird, perhaps a pelican. The bone has half-a-dozen holes drilled in it, and the end is plugged with wax, so as to direct the air to the larger aperture near the end. I bought one from a Tiribi made of a deer's bone. The priests use in their songs a rattle, made of a small pear-shaped tree calabash, lashed to a bone at the small end. This contains a few seeds of the "shot plant," or Canna. It is held upright and solemnly shaken in time with the song until the end of the stanza, when, as a signal for the chorus to strike in, it is given a dexterous twirl, throwing the seeds rapidly around inside. On very solemn occasions a curious box is also used. It is about eight inches long by four square on the end. It is carved out hollow, with a long tongue on one face, isolated by a U-shaped slit. A heavy handle is attached to one end, also carved out of the same block. When used, it is simply struck on the above-mentioned tongue with a bone or piece of hard stick. This is only used on the death of a chief. There is but one in the tribe, and no bribe that I could offer sufficed to buy it. [321]

Fashions in dress change even among savages, at least as civilization approaches. Formerly the dress of the men consisted only of a breech-cloth. It was made of *mastate*, or bark cloth, about a foot wide and seven or eight feet long, tapering at one end. The cloth is made by taking the inner bark of either the India rubber or another tree and beating it with a roughened stick over a log. This loosens the fibre, and renders it soft and flexible. It is then carefully washed until all the gummy matter is washed out. After drying, it is rubbed a little and becomes soft and smooth to the feel. To apply the breech-cloth, the wide end is held against the belly, the remainder being passed between the legs; it is then wound around the waist and the point tucked in; the broad end then falls over in front, for about a foot long, like an apron. When cotton cloth is used, it is simply caught up in front and behind under a cotton belt, with a similar apron in front. Sometimes, for warmth, a shirt of 291 287 291

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

both cases the fireplace was opposite the door, near the side, and not in the middle. 942 352 [354]

From the beams and the roof of the ordinary Bribri house are suspended carrying bags and baskets in which are stored calabashes and other utensils, while bows, arrows, and blowguns are held in crude racks or stuck in the thatch. Under the angle of the roof is often a rude attic, made of rough-hewn plank flooring, on which rests one or more great, cylindrical, corn receptacles, or granaries, of bark, and nearby one is likely to see a string or two of braided corn.

Sometimes a long, goblet-shaped, wooden drum, with an iguana-skin head, a number of circular pieces of iguana-skin for fresh drum-heads, or a cluster of several drums, may swing from a rafter at one side; or one may observe plumes of macaws, and the paws, flesh, or skin of jaguars and armadillos, hanging freely or tucked in a woven *chákara*, or bag, to be used as medicine. Again, but rarely, these may be accompanied with a shaman's small gourd rattle with a bone handle. Tame parrots, parra- 352 534 000

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

times, though rarely, used. The men sometimes carry, suspended from the necklace, the shell of a small species of *murex*, with the varices ground off and a hole drilled in it to make a whistle. These are bought in Terraba, and are highly prized. 301 [321] [534]

"The men sometimes wear headdresses made of feathers. The most prized are the white down feathers from under the tail of the large eagle. Others are made of chicken feathers, or are worked in rows of blue, red, black, yellow, &c., from the plumage of small birds. I have seen one headdress made from the hair of the tail of the great ant-eater, in the place of feathers. The feathers are secured vertically to a tape and extend laterally so as to reach from temple to temple, curling over forward at the top, the tape being tied behind, so as to keep the hair in place." 237 301

Gabb observed facial paintings applied by both sexes, but none were seen by the writer. He refers to designs made with the reddish-brown sap of a vine, the commoner designs being squares or parallelograms, about an inch across, on each cheek. These figures were either solid or made up of bars. Another pigment, called annato, was drawn in stripes or bars on the face, or an indigo fruit juice was smeared on the face and body. Tattooing is unknown. 302 [386] [531] [386] [304]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

372 generated, which requires only a few moments. Even those Indians who have modern appliances use the hand drill for lighting ceremonial fires.

[237] [412] *Fire Fans.*—Pl. XXIII, *b*, represents a type of feather fan, used chiefly to accelerate flame. They are composed of nine or ten feathers of a large bird, laid parallel and fastened together at the base by a split reed wrapping, in some cases reinforced with a binding of cotton or other fiber.

501 [439] *Canoes.*—Although the Bribri have "cayukas" obtained from foreigners, no canoes of native manufacture were found. A toy canoe, about three feet long, was observed in one settlement; this was fashioned from a log and pointed at both ends. Gabb states that even in his time the Bribri had no canoes of their own.

282 415 [171] *Leather Pouches.*—Pl. XXV, *b*, illustrates a crude leathern pouch used as a carrying bag; it closely resembles a common North American type.

534 *Musical Instruments.*—The drum is the most important musical instrument of the Bribri. In shape the common native instru-

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

ment is three feet or less in length, and five or six inches in diameter at the head, narrowing toward the base (pl. XXVI), being constricted about six or seven inches from the bottom, then flaring slightly. Drums are hewn from a solid piece of wood, and fitted with a tight head of iguana-skin, which is shrunken over the large end and held in place with fiber cord glued on with dried blood. The drums are also furnished with a fiber rope for suspension. 534 ●

At a *Chichara* festival one Indian was seen standing with a drum under his left arm and its carrying strap over his left shoulder, slapping the head of the drum with the open right palm. Beside him stood another Indian with his right arm about the drummer's shoulders. They danced with a skipping sidewise step, the drummer beating his instrument while the other thumped his chest in unison with the left hand. [482] [535]

This goblet-like form of drum is antique, as there is a specimen made of pottery, from an ancient grave, in the National Museum at San José. Unfinished drums of a shorter, double-headed, barrel-shaped vari- [172]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

534 ety were seen about the Bribri lodges. Pl. XXVII represents a specimen of this type, kindly presented to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, by Mrs Minor C. Keith.

Rattles (pl. XXV, *c*) are made of small, egg-shaped calabashes, carefully scraped to make them symmetrical, hollowed out, and canna seeds placed in the cavity. The gourd has several perforations drilled in one end, through which is passed twisted fiber cord by which it is attached to a handle made of a bird-bone. In this respect Bribri rattles differ from North American Indian [171] forms, in which the handle invariably passes through the gourd.

A notched stick was obtained, which seems to be identical with the ordinary Bribri bark-beater, but, according to Ramón it was rasped with a stick as an accompaniment, in addition to other musical instruments. The marimba is not found among the Bribri.

Gabb[15] says:

"To accompany the invigorating music of the drum and help the din, an armadillo skin is

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

sometimes used. This is scraped over the rings with a large hard bean-like seed. It at least helps to add to the noise, if it does not contribute melody. A little flute, about as musical as a penny whistle, is sometimes added to the concert, though it seems rather to be looked upon as a toy. These flutes are made of a bone of some bird, perhaps a pelican. The bone has half-a-dozen holes drilled in it, and the end is plugged with wax, so as to direct the air to the larger aperture near the end. I bought one from a Tiribi made of a deer's bone. 534 ●

"On very solemn occasions a curious box is also used. It is about eight inches long by four square on the end. It is carved out hollow, with a long tongue on one face, isolated by a U-shaped slit. A heavy handle is attached to one end, also carved out of the same block. When used, it is simply struck on the above mentioned tongue with a bone or piece of hard stick. This is only used on the death of a chief. There is but one in the tribe, and no bribe that I could offer sufficed to buy it."

Cacique Sticks.—These are long, cane-like staves, made of a dark, hard, heavy, reddish-brown wood called "cacique". As a rule they are entirely plain, but pl. XVII, *b*, exhibits an example of a type, now said to be obsolete, that has the figure of a man rudely carved on the handle. These canes are highly regarded, because of certain 293 [532] [757]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

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SKINNER—BRIBRI

PL. XXV

[facing p. 58]

BLOWGUN PELLETS OF CLAY: LEATHER POUCH: SHAMAN'S CALABASH RATTLE
(Length of the rattle, 7¼ inches)

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

sometimes used. This is scraped over the rings with a large hard bean-like seed. It at least helps to add to the noise, if it does not contribute melody. A little flute, about as musical as a penny whistle, is sometimes added to the concert, though it seems rather to be looked upon as a toy. These flutes are made of a bone of some bird, perhaps a pelican. The bone has half-a-dozen holes drilled in it, and the end is plugged with wax, so as to direct the air to the larger aperture near the end. I bought one from a Tiribi made of a deer's bone. 534●

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2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

[534]

DRUM WITH HEAD OF IGUANA-SKIN
(Height, 24 inches)

[facing p. 92]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

534

DRUM WITH DOUBLE HEAD
(Height, 20 inches)

[facing p. 93]

415 ing liquids, in the kitchen, and for carrying water to the fields or on trips. Interestingly enough, a ring base to sustain the gourd erect does not seem to be known, the vessel being placed on the ground and balanced by rocks or the legs of the *fogón*. In addition to the [231] uses mentioned above, gourds are used as bee hives (see fig. 4, *d*), as a receptacle for the [283] spindle whorl while making thread (see fig. 5, *c*), for carrying seed when planting, and are employed extensively as sieves. The use of the gourd as a sieve is very common amongst the present close neighbors of the *Boruca*, the *Talamanca* peoples.[31] For use as 412 a sieve, the gourd is covered with holes made 415 by a combination cutter and puncturer. This tool has a handle of pejibaye palm in one end of which a forked piece of metal with one prong longer than the other is inserted and bound by string. The longest prong is shoved into the gourd until the shortest penetrates the outer surface deeply enough to cut a line in a circle. This operation has the double [531] effect of making a circular hole and at the same time a line design around the aperture [534] (see figs. 7, *b–8*; 7, *c–3*). Gourds are also made into *maracas* or rattles to accompany the drum at celebrations (see p. 29). There is 531 no rule about the decoration of the gourds. They are either left untouched, or are carved in various designs, the most popular of which is the leaf motif, although animal figures sometimes appear. The patterns are cut with a knife, and left to turn a darker color with time.

381 **Glues.** Glues are rarely used by the *Boruca*. 314 A glue that is used for mending vessels, or, at times for water-proofing the dug-out canoes is made from a small palm (*Elaeis melanococca Gaertn.*) called in Boruca *tuskra'*, *tus*, meaning "short," and *kra'*, meaning "plant." This palm has thorny leaves and red fruit (see p. 15). To make the glue, the trunk is cut in pieces and spread out in the open so that the dew has easy access to the sap. The following morning, the residue, which is the glue, is gathered.

323 **Pottery.** Very little pottery is now being 177 made by the *Boruca*. The European war, however, has caused iron cooking vessels to become practically unobtainable as well as prohibitive in price, and the Indians are slowly

[31] Skinner, 1920, pp. 66–67.

539 When the sister became pregnant, the *sukia* or medicine man was very angry and ordered that she be eaten by three tigers. To carry this out, the *sukia* waited until the woman was in a certain spot, and then made her unable to move. He ordered a man to climb a tree to watch and to report what occurred.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, the three tigers came out of the woodland roaring and went right to the woman. Two were spotted with black and one was a yellow lion. The watcher saw them play together and pet her. The woman remained frozen. When they

[Continued at top of page 29-B]

THE ARTS

534 **Music.** There are very few genuinely aboriginal instruments left amongst the *Boruca*, and in public, they play no music that can definitely be called their own. The *maraca*, or rattle, is undoubtedly pre-Spanish, as frequently clay *maracas* are found in the early graves. The modern *maraca* is generally made of a gourd and often has little holes at the base to give more sound. The gourd is filled with little round black seeds called *takra'*, and attached to a bone handle (see p. 18). Rattles or *maracas* are also made by men and women of a grass (*Arundinella Deppeana* Nees.) which grows in the savanna. This grass is called *suge-ra'* in Boruca, and *cola de venado* or *cola de chivo* in Spanish. The upper portion when young is purplish, while the lower part and the old grass is the color of straw. The Indians use both the old and young grass, thereby giving the rattle two distinct colors. It is woven with the fingers, the weave used being called *ra-ta'* (see fig. 10, *c*), and the finished product is filled with corn to make it sound. Drums are round (see fig. 7, *c–5*), and made from a piece of the trunk of cedar or of balsa, and, very occasionally, of the coyol palm (*Acrocomia vinifera* Oerst.). Both ends are covered with wild peccary hide and fastened with thongs of the same hide. They are played by hand without sticks. A *chirimia* or flute-like instrument is made of cane and wood, and is used in a burlesque dance of bull-fighting on the first of January, as well as on the eighth of December with the *negritos*. The *zambombia* is an instrument of the *Boruca* which has probably come to them through

[continued at bottom of page 29-B]

tired of playing, one of the spotted tigers killed her, and they all ate her, all of her, until not even a drop of blood was left to tell the tale. 539

The watcher was so frightened that he could not get down from the tree until the following day. The rest of the tribe also came at daybreak to find and to talk to him who had witnessed the death of the woman who because she became pregnant by her brother furnished the example for the law that whoever should copy this act would be severely punished.

THE ARTS

contact with the Chiriquíans. The *zambombia* is a hollowed stick divided inside into separate compartments. The divisions are made with pieces of the pejibaye palm. The same black seeds used in the *maracas* are put in these compartments, and the *zambombia* is moved backward and forward to produce noise. In the village there is one accordion which also is played at celebrations. 534

The music on these occasions is almost entirely copied from the Chiriquíans who in turn have received a considerable negro influence. Waltzes are also popular, and some foxtrots are heard. 533 [177]

Dancing. The *Boruca* are said to have secret dances. Their two public dances, if so they may be called, that are not copied from the Chiriquíans, are the "bullfight" and the *negritos*. The "bullfight" takes place on New Year's Day. A balsa (*Ochroma Lagopus* Sw.) mask of a huge bull's head painted in black with white lines, and with the horns and the upper part of the skull from a real bull, is put over a framework of a curved piece of wood that has a supporting wooden cross piece. This helps the whole to project from the head of the wearer in the manner of a real bull's head. The mask is usually worn by one of the young bloods of the village. Another man wears a balsa mask of one face with a little face on the chin, suggesting a dual personification (see fig. 10, *b*). These are the only two "characters." Almost all the men in the village, however, put on balsa masks of various types, some with gaily colored paper pasted on the surface, some painted, and some perfectly plain. The 535 [532]

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

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Boruca

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4, Ox and Indian woman laden with grasses for a roof. *b*, Artifacts of the Boruca: 1, mantle or skirt; 2, hake; 3, cloth; 4, mortars or pestles; 5, mush; 6, four-legged stool; 7, man's belt; 8, sieve; c, Artifacts of the Boruca: 1, four-legged stool with head and tail; 2, baskets; 3, sieve; 4, bark cloth; 5, drum. *d*, Women wearing the mantle, or skirt, and blouse.

[p.57]

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

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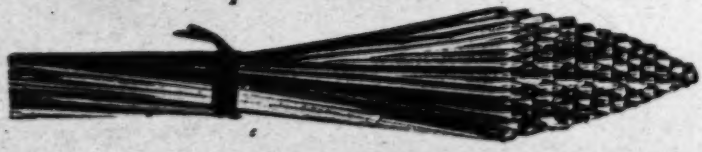

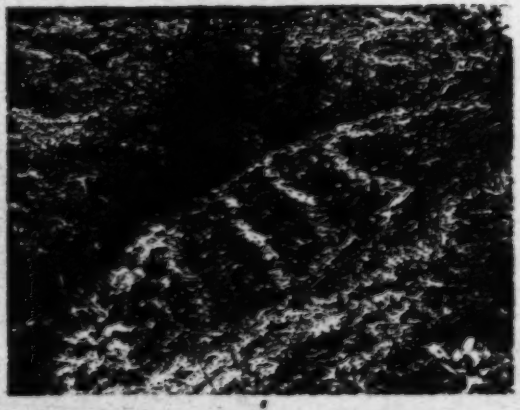

a, Funeral of a woman. b, Mask used in New Year's celebration. c, Straw weave (¾ actual size). d, Basket or weave with bone handles. e, Remains of summer agriculture on the savanna.

[p.60]

4:Pittier de Fabrega B-5 (ca. 1900) 1903
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omen. Now, while Sórkura was in the woods, Sibú went to his house. Sibú went to Sórkura's door, and spoke to the spider, "Art thou there, art thou there?" And the spider answered, "Here I am, here I am." Sibú also asked the dried skunk, "Art thou there and dry?" And the dried skunk answered, "Here I am and dry!" 539

Sibú had brought with him a cotton apron. He blew on the skunk, and it breathed again; it stood on its hind legs like a man, and was ordered to fasten the apron upon his body. Sibú had brought, also, the Singer's Calabash,[1] and he said to the skunk: "O thou, my uncle; thou shalt get the Calabash!" The skunk replied, "Oh no, I prefer to have the Drum of the Helper!" Then they played for a long time, until the music pervaded the wilderness. And Sórkura, alone in the woods, said to himself: "What is that resounding *tuś, tuś*, in my house?" And he thought: "What is it that so resounds? No one would dare to go to my house to bewitch." Then he thought again that he would go and watch. He went home, and hid himself behind a wall, to wait and see.

Sibú came again to play with the skunk. But then Sórkura was waiting for him with his spears. He threw one of these, and Sibú evaded it, so that it stuck fast in a wooden pillar; he threw another, but Sibú warded it off with a pot; the third one fell into the fire, and the fourth went through the door. And then Sibú ran away so swiftly that Sórkura only could grasp the whistle, which remained in his hand. Sórkura's people went after Sibú to kill him, but he could not be found.

Four days passed by, and Sibú was not seen anywhere. When he went back to Sórkura's house, this time under the disguise of an old Sórkura, — buried in far-away times, and now covered full with wounds and sores, — he said, "I am told that your boys stole Sibú's whistle." Sórkura answered, "How is it? dost thou happen to be Sibú?" Then Sibú spoke again, "Thou willest make fun of me, because I am so old and sore! I Sibú, the Almighty! Could Sibú be like myself?" But Sórkura insisted, "No, thou mightst be Sibú!" And Sibú went on, "Was Sibú, the Whistle-Bearer, like myself?"

Sórkura went and took the whistle, which was hanging from the brim of a basket. He showed it to Sibú, and Sibú grasped it; but Sórkura did not loose the string. Then Sibú spoke once more, and said, "The good gods manifest good virtues: what you have done is wrong! Let the string go." But Sórkura said, "No." Sibú then

[1] This is the sacred calabash, filled with the hard seeds of the *Canna*, and used by the singer (*stré-kur*) to mark the cadence of the ceremonial songs. The chief-singer has a helper (*sinś*) provided for the same purpose with a drum. Therefore, the skunk declines the honor of leading the tune, and is modest enough to be satisfied with the drum. [534]

352 sufficient for an adult to sit in, is an important item of trade. They are found in Cabécar, Térraba, and Boruca households (*see* Trade).

286 [177] **Weaving.** The art of weaving was possibly borrowed by the Bribri from other cultures. It is practically non-existent today and does not appear to have been practised by the Cabécares in historical times. Gabb [91] gives a detailed account of the technique and mentions belts, burial cloths for bones, breechcloths, and "women's petticoats." Undoubtedly, skirts are meant and not underwear. Skinner cites headbands and blankets.[92] The only evidence of actual Bribri weaving known to the writer are belts, made by some men on the upper Lari and at Cabagra, and four skirts, made by women who claim to have been taught by the Borucas. The Bribri weave is distinguished by its coarseness. The decoration [531] of the skirts consists of wide brown and white stripes which suggest a relationship with that of the Borucas.

415 824 **Gourds.** Gourds are employed as water jars, containers, and cups for liquids of any kind; as receptacles, often with a *pita* handle for hanging on the wall; for carrying seeds when planting; and as sieves, in particular for making [252] *pejibaye* flour. Pieces of gourds are sometimes [264] used as spoons to dish out food and occa- [534] sionally to eat with. Rattles are also made.
[531] The gourds are generally plain, and when decorated, the designs are crude cuts or child-like drawings. The holes in the sieves are made [321] with a metal point attached to a wooden handle.

323 **Pottery.** Today, only in the region of the upper Lari is there any attempt at pottery making. Here the Bribri are said still to fashion the large clay chicha jars seen in the round houses (*see* Furnishings; fig. 4, *c*) by coiling. This process is described in detail by Skinner.[93] 273 Chicha is generally kept in leaf-lined *havas* or in large wooden troughs.

501 824 **Canoes.** The Talamanca Bribri are the only people to make canoes. Cedar, *espavel* (*Ana-*

[91] Skinner, 1920, pp. 77–78. The writer has a large brown and white blanket made by the Bribri men about 1900.
[92] Skinner, 1920, pp. 67–68.

381 **Glues.** *See* Musical Instruments and Hunting.

281 **Skins.** There is relatively little use of cattle hide among these people. The Cabécares of the [231] Pacific slope who have most of the cattle, and rarely the Bribri and Cabécares of Talamanca, [415] make pouches or hunting bags from the sacs of bulls. The Pacific Cabécares also copy their non-indigenous neighbors in using skins to dry rice, beans, and cacao. Both wild pig and jaguar hide are made into pouches. Pieces of [824] deer hide are used for minute bags which [777] contain good luck seeds to put on children's necklaces. In upper Talamanca men (chiefly [292] medicine men) wear deer and jaguar skins over their clothing on festive occasions. Peccary [534] hide is used to cover drums on the Pacific slope and iguana skin is used on the Caribbean side.

314 **Rubber.** On the Caribbean slope, rubber is 824 tapped from the wild tree (*Castilla fallax* O. F. Cook) by the Cabécares and made into pouches (*see* Hunting).

322 **Wood and Stone.** Wood, of course, has a variety of uses many of which have been mentioned earlier. Among the Bribri of the [252] Caribbean littoral, grinding tables are often made of wood and are large enough for several women to use at the same time. They are located beside a water hole or stream and are balanced on logs. On the Caribbean side, [415] mahogany or cedar mixing trays or troughs, [273] up to twelve feet in length and supported by four feet, are used for chicha mash (*see* Furnishings). Vertical wooden mortars for rice, [412] shallow mortars, and large trays or bowls are [415] common. These last two items are used for drying foodstuffs or even for mixing paste [251] with water. Wooden staffs known as *cacique* [252] sticks are an important part of the medicine man's equipment (*see* Special Paraphernalia and Significance).

372 In upper Talamanca, the fire stick is used (*see* Fire-making).

324 Stone is not worked today but is employed 287 for food preparation and the manufacture of bark cloth.

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him. Both benches had four feet, but one had a protruding tail and head with a red spot. The two men then went outside and the chief doctor closed the door to keep others away. From within, one could hear the elder man's voice in a song which gradually became louder and louder.

According to custom, they sat on benches in front of the house and the head man sang to the novice. Two of the assistant medicine men went out to watch for the sunrise so that they could warn the chief that it was time to put the novice back in the hut.

When they came in, the aspirant took off his white blanket. The head medicine man took the feathers from the first carrying bag which was still on the low bench, some stones, a staff, a jaguar skin, a long reed flute (*kuLa*) which only the medicine men can make and put these things in the leaf room. The two new benches were not included. Then the head man entered with the aspirant to arrange the details. When he came out, he said to the novice who remained inside, "You do not have permission to sleep, not even a little."

The aspirant had to stay in the room all the following day without sleeping because to be a doctor he must show his power of self control. In fact, this endurance test was explained by a simple question: if a medicine man were to have a very sick patient and fell asleep, what would happen?

The drinks and food were now passed for the fourth time with the same ceremony as before. Then the head man blew a conch-shell horn right by the novice's wall and pushed the leaves. This was to be certain that he was not dozing. The aspirant was forbidden to talk, but he answered by blowing at times a conch-shell horn and at others a flute. Every now and then the other medicine men would poke their staffs at the wall and receive a blown attestation of his wakefulness or a snore. This continued throughout the day.

At night the ordeal ended and the novice could leave his leaf compartment and take his stones. However, he had to wait four days before he could finish the mouth-washing ceremony and become in truth a *jawá*.

Sickness. On the Caribbean side, but less often on the Pacific, a lean-to for a sick person is made of *prjibeye* leaves at one end of the

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476 traditions, are known by the Spanish term
574 *juntas* or *bLo-ʒé* (chicha-to drink) in Bribri,
273 or in Cabécar *dí*[204]-*ʒo* (chicha-to drink). They are held when there is need of group labor such as building a house, clearing a field, [571] making a bridge, etc. It is the only time except at death or bone burial that groups of people meet. The person giving the *junta* must supply liberal quantities of chicha and at least sufficient food. Dancing with singing, particularly [535] on the Caribbean side, forms part of the enter- [533] tainment. On the Pacific, singing is not as [184] [TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P.69(B)--Analyst] [534]

534 **Musical Instruments.** Upright drums are the preferred instruments of Talamanca. In pre- [172] Columbian graves they are found fashioned of clay and occur from miniature sizes to three [824] feet in height. Today they are made of palm [237] or cedar with one end covered with iguana [381] skin and the other end open. The skin is [824] fastened to the wood with a glue made from the red fruit of the *butsí* tree and is then tied with *pita*. Their size varies from two and a half to three feet and they are played by hand. Formerly a small all-wooden drum with a [766] U-shaped slit[205] was used at the burial of [184] chiefs. These were played with a bone or a stick. The people on the Pacific side do not have the upright drum but use the Chiricano *caja* or round drum of palm wood covered at [237] both ends with wild boar skin and played with two sticks.

534 In Talamanca, and as a rule in all *jawá*
237 houses, armadillo shells are rubbed with a stick while those of land turtles are used in a similar manner or as clappers. The conch shell is made [202] into a horn to relay messages but not for a musical instrument. Rattles of gourds filled with seeds or pebbles and with fowl bone or wooden handles are also seen.

533 **Tempo.** There are varied beats for the upright drum: 4 short and 1 long; 3 short and 1 long; 2 short and 1 long. As many as twenty drums were played at one time in Talamanca [184] when the Singer functioned. On the Pacific side, the old pieces are seldom heard. The [TEXT CONTINUES MIDDLE OF P.69(B)--Analyst]

[192] [204] *dí* is also the word for water and is often used for river.

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476 574 273 [184] [534] common and the accordions, guitars, and the round drum or *caja* take the place of the aboriginal upright drum (*see* The Dance). The guests, who wear their best clothing (*see* Adornment), repay their host by giving their labor free until the project is completed. These affairs are noted for the excessive drinking. [578] Few if any fights occur, however, and the over-intoxicated as a rule simply fall asleep guarded by his female companions or vice-versa, and the joint work of the men begins as usual the following day lasting until noon.

THE ARTS

The

533 535 [534] majority of the dances and music consist of the Chiricano *son*, *punta*, and the waltz. The accompaniment is formed by an accordion, guitar, or violin and the round drum.

535 **Dances.** There are many different dances, both in connection with ceremonies and for sheer pleasure. The Bribri in particular have the greatest number of secular dances which [476] are performed at gatherings called *juntas* usually held to build a house, fell a clearing, or some such joint labor where friends come in to help. Many of the songs that accompany the dances are in a language not understandable [198] to the singers. Some are sung in Térraba. There are two traditional dance methods: in a line or in a circle. The circle type is called *buLik-Lak*. If drums accompany the performers, they remain outside of the ring. Arms are raised horizontally and interlocked. The first movement consists of one step to the right side and a short one to the left with the body inclined slightly forward. The second movement starts in a similar fashion but the beat changes and the two steps are more marked, the second ending in a small jump or hop. Suddenly, the dancers go in the opposite direction and continue with the second movement only. The sideward hop necessarily makes the circle go forward and backward. In the *surbon*, a circle dance, the ring is formed first by men and then women put their heads between the arms of the men and all participate.

There are a number of line dances, for

[534] Gabb, 1875, p. 517.